

# YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Missouri Department of  
**Economic Development**

# **YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM**

## **REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR 2021**

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Pursuant to Sections 135.460, 620.1100 and 620.1103, RSMo., the Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention Program (YOP) is authorized to allocate up to \$6 million in tax credits per calendar year for projects that target Missouri's at-risk youth. With the Governor's authorization of the Special Cycle of YOP to combat the impact of COVID-19, the Department of Economic Development allocated a total of \$5,735,908 in YOP tax credits to 36 youth organizations across the state. Contributions to these organizations will fund programming for 35 youth service projects and the construction of one facility. The 2021 project list is enclosed.

YOP projects approved in 2021 have the potential to generate more than \$11.4 million in contributions, leveraging at least \$5.7 million in private sector dollars. Since its inception in 1997, YOP has facilitated more than \$208 million in contributions for projects serving Missouri's most at-risk youth.

YOP primarily partners with non-profit organizations to fund programs for disadvantaged youth, teaming up to leverage private dollars instead of relying solely on public/government funding. These programs help youth break down barriers to a healthy, successful life and realize their potential as productive citizens. YOP acts as an incentive to provide this specialized programming for youth who would otherwise not have such opportunities.

YOP has established program outcomes as a means to measure and verify the program's impact throughout the state. Priority is given to projects with outcomes impacting one or more of the following six areas:

- 1. Increase the number of at-risk youth that receive a high school diploma.**
- 2. Increase the number of at-risk youth that receive a high school equivalency.**
- 3. Increase the number of at-risk youth that remain in school, improve grades, and/or earn course credit(s) toward a diploma.**
- 4. Reduce the number of at-risk youth committing crimes and violent acts.**
- 5. Increase the number of at-risk youth that have completed an employment skills education and workforce development program.**

Table 1.1 shows the amount of tax credits authorized, issued, and redeemed to date from allocations made in the most recent three calendar years. Taxpayers (donors) have the tax year in which they made a contribution plus five succeeding tax years to redeem their tax credits.

**Table 1.1: Tax Credit Utilization**

	<b>CY2019</b>	<b>CY2020<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>CY2021</b>
<b>Credits Authorized To Date<sup>1</sup></b>	\$5,928,935	\$0	\$5,735,908
<b>Credits Issued To Date<sup>2</sup></b>	\$4,673,113	\$0	\$607,708
<b>Credits Redeemed To Date<sup>3</sup></b>	\$3,569,306	\$0	\$0

<sup>1</sup> Credits Authorized = Total Amount Authorized each calendar year minus recaptured, as of 12/31/2021.

<sup>2</sup> Credits Issued = Total Credits issued as of 12/31/2021 for the projects approved in each calendar year.

<sup>3</sup> Credits Redeemed = Total Credits that have been redeemed by contributing taxpayers as of 12/31/2021 for contributions made to projects approved in each year.

<sup>4</sup> Credits authorized for 2020 were 0 because no new projects were approved, due to budget concerns stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

For projects approved in the calendar year, YOP reports on the anticipated number of youth achieving positive outcomes in the categories identified below.

**Table 1.2: Expected Outcomes for Youth**

<b>Earning a High School Diploma or Equivalency</b>	558
<b>Earning School Credits, Improving Academically, or Increasing GPA</b>	7,025
<b>Not Committing Crimes or Completing Violence Prevention Courses</b>	17,490
<b>Abstaining from Drug and Alcohol Use; Completing Prevention Programs</b>	5,734
<b>Completing Life Skills Training; Financial Literacy; Participating in Mentoring</b>	33,037
<b>Learning Employment Skills and/or Placed in a Job or Internship</b>	1,026
<b>Increasing Knowledge in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, or Business</b>	0
<b>Achieving Other Outcomes</b> (Such as: counseling, crisis intervention and emergency shelter, post-secondary knowledge and preparation, case management, etc.)	41,420

Despite continuing to experience adversities in fundraising due to the pandemic, nonprofit organizations are successfully implementing approved YOP

projects to help at-risk youth become productive adults. Coyote Hill Christian Children's Home and Mission: St. Louis are two such organizations successfully using YOP tax credits to cultivate new donors, increase reach and capacity, and contribute in a very real way to meet the needs of disadvantaged youth. The following summaries demonstrate the ways in which these agencies are making positive, lasting differences in the lives of Missouri's most at-risk youth.

## **Coyote Hill Christian Children's Home**

### **Who They Are**

For 30 years, Coyote Hill has worked to keep foster youth safe in a growing foster care community, which includes six large foster family homes situated on 300 acres. Coyote Hill's mission is to create secure homes for children to reside in at the fostering community in Harrisburg, and in their licensed foster homes throughout mid-Missouri. Coyote Hill is committed to creating a safe place to be a child.

### **What They Do and Who They Serve**

Coyote Hill annually serves 50 or more children from central Missouri with an average stay of nine to 10 months. In addition to safe housing for children, Coyote Hill provides resources and training to help parents secure a temporary or forever home for a child in foster care. Foster parents help a child heal from trauma they have experienced and teach them valuable life skills, provide academic support and therapeutic services in a family-style setting. Family Advocates are also provided with a role to consistently provide in-home coaching and mentoring for foster families. A relationship is maintained with the family to ensure they have all of the resources needed to be successful in creating stability for their child throughout their foster parenting journey.



### **A Client's Story**

In August 2020, Coyote Hill opened its newest home in Harrisburg, Mo., for children in foster care. That month, four siblings were brought into the home, ranging from ages 2 to 13.

Since welcoming them, each of these children has flourished. The oldest, now 14, came into foster care completely in shock, and was struggling with fear and discomfort. This was understandable for each of the youth, due to the trauma and neglect they had experienced. This child in particular was a girl of few words, preferring to be alone. She hid in baggy clothing and did not have healthy outlets to express herself. During 2021, her community has watched her incredible transformation. She is now active in her school, and is devoted to athletics and extracurricular activities. She has made progress beyond what had been predicted when she arrived one year ago. She creates art through writing music, and displays an attitude of kindness, intelligence and generosity. Both she and everyone in her life are excited for her future, which includes goals such as learning Korean, traveling, enrolling in nursing school, and so much more.

All of this is possible because of this home for foster youth, which was built through the Youth Opportunities Program. It is so much more than a house, it is a home for children from difficult backgrounds to finally be safe, supported, and loved. Coyote Hill thanks the State of Missouri for helping them to change the future through changing the lives of children in foster care.



## **Mission: St. Louis**

### **Who They Are**

Mission: St. Louis, founded in 2006, aims to break the cycle of poverty by creating opportunities for education and employment through a strategic set of programs. These programs work together to address critical stages in the cycle of poverty, like high school graduation and recidivism. The current YOP project with Mission: St. Louis utilizes YOP donations to provide academic support, trauma-sensitive social/emotional learning activities, and community engagement opportunities to at-risk youth attending two St. Louis public charter schools through their Beyond School Program. The Beyond School program provides low-income, minority students with the supports necessary to get back on track to complete high school and become successful.

### **What They Do and Who They Serve**

With the assistance of YOP tax credits, Mission: St. Louis is able to bolster the Beyond School Program. More than an afterschool program, Beyond School recognizes that a quality education is a foundation for life, empowering youth to succeed beyond the classroom. Staff are embedded at partner schools to support under-resourced Kindergarten through 8th grade students who are at risk of dropping out. Staff are available for students during and after school hours. The trauma-informed program is evidence-based and includes layers of caring adult support, including low adult-student ratios (max 3:1). Daily activities focus on three critical areas that address a student's risk for high school dropout: academic achievement, social emotional learning, and leadership/enrichment experiences. Key outcomes are Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills (identity, empathy, etc.) that give students tools to know themselves, connect with others, and become inclusive leaders. These foundational SEL skills support students' academic outcomes and prepare them for the future. On average, students grow 1.5 years in reading and math and 70% increased their social emotional skills. Staff and volunteers are trained in trauma-informed approach and cultural humility to foster the critical relationships that support students' transformative growth.

## Evin's Story

Evin graduated from the Beyond School program this past spring after participating in the program for two years. Despite a challenging background, Evin thrived in the program. Through Beyond School, he learned to make intentional decisions, connect with others and resolve conflict. Evin persevered through many challenges using these SEL skills to reach his goal of graduating 8th grade and playing basketball in high school. In 2021, he began his freshman year at Bishop DuBourg High School.



## Kenya's Story

Kenya is a Beyond School student who had previously been struggling academically in the same classes and with the same assignments. Her grade in math dropped to a 7% because of an important project that Kenya had not started. Her teacher alerted the Beyond School team and staff were able to get Kenya a one-week extension.

Kenya was connected with an Academic Mentor named Abbie. She could see that Kenya was feeling unmotivated, and at first did not know where to begin. But Abbie was so committed to helping Kenya understand and complete the project that she stayed for extra time and worked with her during "Choice Time." They were able to finish the project on that same day. Kenya turned in her project the next day and earned a B, dramatically increasing her math grade. Abbie had now become someone she trusts. Together, Kenya and her mentor were able to put the work in to be successful. Mission: St. Louis staff are so proud of both Kenya and Abbie.



<b>CY 2021 Approved YOP Projects</b>	<b>Credits Authorized</b>
Agape Ministry Of Warren County, Inc.	\$200,000.00
Aim High St. Louis	\$200,000.00
Big Brothers Big Sisters Of The Ozarks	\$108,678.00
Boys & Girls Club Of Springfield	\$200,000.00
Boys & Girls Clubs Of The Columbia Area	\$200,000.00
Boys And Girls Club Of Joplin, Mo (DBA Of Southwest Mo)	\$190,670.00
Boys And Girls Club Of Poplar Bluff	\$150,000.00
Boys And Girls Clubs Of Greater Kansas City	\$200,000.00
Boys Hope Girls Hope Of Kansas City, Inc.	\$182,580.00
Boys Hope Girls Hope Of St. Louis, Inc.	\$200,000.00
Chad's Coalition For Mental Health	\$120,000.00
Child Center - Marygrove (FKA Catholic Comprehensive Services)	\$200,000.00
Children's Home Society Of Missouri (DBA Familyforward)	\$200,000.00
Covenant House Missouri	\$200,000.00
Evangelical Children's Home (DBA Every Child's Hope)	\$125,000.00
Foster Care Coalition Of Greater St. Louis	\$111,867.00
Gene Slay's Girls & Boys Club Of St. Louis, Inc.	\$198,192.00
Girl Scouts Of Eastern Missouri	\$100,000.00
Girls Incorporated Of St. Louis	\$99,812.00
Good Shepherd Children & Family Services	\$200,000.00
Guardian Angel Settlement Association	\$200,000.00
Hope Ranch Of Missouri	\$200,000.00
Junior Achievement Of Greater St. Louis	\$200,000.00
Kids In The Middle, Inc.	\$100,000.00
Kingdom House (DBA Lifewise StL)	\$200,000.00
Mission: St. Louis	\$150,860.00
Operation Breakthrough, Inc.	\$200,000.00
Our Little Haven	\$187,500.00
Saint Louis Counseling, Inc. (FKA Catholic Family Services)	\$200,000.00
Saint Louis Story Stitchers Artists' Collective	\$42,409.00
St. Louis Arc	\$171,140.00
St. Louis Bereavement Center For Young People (DBA Annie's Hope)	\$18,927.00
The Oasis Institute	\$70,739.00
Whole Kids Outreach, Inc.	\$169,990.00
Women In Charge	\$37,544.00
Wyman Center, Inc.	\$200,000.00